

REMARKS

This in response to the Office Action of December 2, 2003. Claims 1-23 were rejected. Claim 2 was amended. Claims 1-23 are pending.

Applicant has amended claim 2 in accord with the Examiner's rejection of claim 2 under 35 U.S.C. §112. Applicant has made the requested correction to spell out the acronym "FIFO" and to clarify that the FIFO is a buffer. Support for a FIFO buffer can be found in Claim 2 and elsewhere in Applicant's specification which teaches that the FIFO temporarily stores compressed trace data, and hence performs a data buffering action.

The Examiner rejected Claim 1, 3-11, 13-15, and 17-23 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Huang et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 5,748,904) in view of McCullough et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 6,615,371). Claim 2 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Huang in view of McCullough and further in view of Miura et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 5,625,785). Claims 12 and 16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Huang in view of McCullough et al and further in view of Lim (U.S. Pat. No. 5,434,622).

The basis of all of the Examiner's 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejections require McCullough. Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection on the grounds that McCullough is not prior art for the purposes of a 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejection. McCullough was filed on March 11, 2002 and does not claim priority to an early application such that its priority date is March 11, 2002. Applicant's invention has a filing date of April 30, 2001, which is earlier than the March 11, 2002 priority date of McCullough. Consequently, McCullough does not qualify as prior art for the purposes of a 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejection.

Applicant also respectfully submits that one of ordinary skill in the art would not be motivated to combine the compression technology of Huang with those of a tracing system for tracing the execution of executed instructions in a computer system. Huang is directed towards the compression of graphics data (e.g., pixel data) for storage in DRAMs, as described in column 1, lines 47-52 of Huang. Some of the compression techniques utilized in Huang are graphics specific, such as bit-map compression, as

described in column 5, lines 48-56. A bit-map is generally defined as a representation of a graphics image. Huang thus compresses graphics data and includes compression modules utilizing compression techniques specifically designed for processing graphics data. There is no teaching or suggestion in Huang to apply graphics compression technology to other fields, let alone a tracing system. Applicant thus respectfully submits that Huang provides no teaching or suggestion for combination with trace systems, is directed towards a graphics data compression and storage which is in a different art than tracing systems, and compresses a different type of data for a fundamentally different purpose.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the application is now in condition for allowance. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned if there are any residual issues that can be resolved through a telephone call.

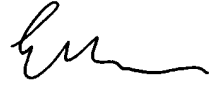
The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any appropriate fees to Deposit Account No. 03-3117.

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Respectfully submitted,
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By: _____


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